

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

The Applicant thanks the Office for the careful consideration given to his application in the communication mailed 09/10/2007. In that communication, the Office objected to the drawings for informalities. Claims 1, 2, and 7 – 33 are under final rejection. Claim 33 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bates. Claims 1, 2, and 7 – 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bates in view of Bailey et al. The Applicant's response will be addressed in the same order.

The replacement drawing sheets are submitted herewith as a separate file. The Applicant intended to attach them with the previous response on 06/13/2007, and their absence from that response was inadvertent.

Claim 33 is canceled without prejudice, thereby obviating the 102(b) rejection.

Regarding the rejection under 103(a) of claims 1, 2 and 7 – 32, the Applicant points out that the Office has not made out a prima facie case of obviousness in that the Bates and Bailey references do not teach the claimed invention. Particularly, they do not teach the element of "providing air alternately to the donut shaped zone and at least one of the pie shaped zones" of Claim 1. Also, they do not teach an air permeable donut shaped zone of Claims 1 and 11.

Nonetheless, the Applicant has amended the claims to better define the invention over the cited references. In particular, Claims 1, 11 – 14, and 17 – 18 are amended to define the air permeable zones as "fluidized bed" zones. The Office asserts that Bates teaches a plurality of air-permeable zones proximate to one another, but a review of Bates shows a plurality of "equi-spaced elongate inserts" that do not appear to be air permeable.

Supposing that the Office is construing the air permeable zones to be the

gaps between the inserts, the present amendments are intended to show that the zones refer to the "fluidized bed" structure described in many places in the specification. Bates has no such structure, and therefore the claims as amended define over the reference. Therefore, Claims 1 and 11 should be allowable.

Claims 9, 19, and 28 are canceled without prejudice. Although it is believed the subject matter may be allowable, the cancellation is for the purpose of complying with the new 5/25 rule that is scheduled to come into effect on 11/01/2007.

Dependent Claims 2, 7, 8, and 10 depend from Claim 1. Dependent Claims 12 – 18, 20 – 27, and 29 – 32 depend from claim 11. All the dependent claims should be allowable if their independent claims are allowable because they incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim to which they refer. 35 U.S.C. 112, para. 4.

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant believes all the claims as amended are allowable. The Office is encouraged to telephone the Applicant's attorney to quickly resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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